

Personal Sales & Promotion Policy

Purpose

Foothills Unitarian exists to cultivate belonging, spiritual depth, and collective care. Our ministries, small groups, and communication channels are spaces of trust and shared purpose, not marketplaces. This policy clarifies boundaries around personal business promotion in order to protect equity, prevent pressure or favoritism, and keep our shared spaces focused on mission.

Guiding Principles

- Participation in Foothills ministries should never carry implicit financial pressure
- No individual or business should gain advantage through access to church platforms
- Clear boundaries help maintain trust, inclusion, and fairness across our community
- Community connection is welcome; commercial promotion is not

What Is Not Permitted

Church ministries, programs, small groups, committees, events, and communication channels **may not be used to promote, advertise, or solicit:**

- Personal businesses, professional services, or products created by congregants (including books, curricula, courses, or other materials offered for sale)
- Sales of goods or services for individual financial benefit
- Referral codes, affiliate links, or discount promotions
- Fundraising for non-Foothills causes not formally approved by leadership

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Verbal promotion during meetings or gatherings
- Flyers, business cards, or sign-up sheets
- Emails, newsletters, Slack/Group posts, or social media connected to Foothills
- Announcements before or after services or group meetings

What Is Permitted

The following are allowed and encouraged when they support healthy community life:

- **Relationship-based sharing** (e.g., one-to-one conversations outside of ministry spaces)
- **Church-sponsored fundraising or events** formally approved by staff or the Board
- **Resource sharing** that is clearly non-commercial and not tied to personal financial gain
- **Mutual aid or care-based requests** (e.g., meals, rides, support during hardship)
- **Offering professional skills as a gift to the community** in support of Foothills' mission, provided the contribution is clearly volunteer-based and not used to market, promote, or sell services or products

If someone asks directly and privately for a recommendation, members may respond, but it should not turn into group-level promotion or ever create the perception that individual businesses are promoted by the church.

Special Circumstances & Exceptions

- Ministries or events that involve vendors, artists, or service providers (e.g., auctions, fairs, special events) must be staff-approved and use transparent, equitable selection processes.
- Any proposed exception must be reviewed in advance by the Executive Team.

Enforcement & Care

If this boundary is crossed:

- A staff member or ministry leader will address the situation directly and kindly
- Repeated violations may result in loss of access to leadership roles or communication channels
- The goal is education and repair, not punishment

Questions & Discernment

When in doubt, ask:

Would this create pressure, privilege, or confusion about why we're gathered?

Questions or requests for clarification should be directed to a member of the Executive Team.

Previous Version [Date]

Content of Previous Version of Guidance

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